



VOL. 67, NO. 12  
DECEMBER 2007

# THE DOVERELLO

ST. BONAVENTURE SECULAR FRANCISCANS ✕ DETROIT, MICHIGAN



Fresco, "La Natività" by Giotto, Lower Basilica of St. Francis, Assisi

## ST. FRANCIS AND THE CHRISTMAS CRIB

The Christmas crib (crèche, presepe, nacimiento, szopka) recalls one of the two greatest events of all history – God becoming human and God being our redeemer. The crib carries the message: "I bring you news of great joy – you are loved." When Franciscan Bl. John Duns Scotus was beatified, on the medal struck for the occasion were the words: **Incarnatio – Summum Opus Dei** — The Incarnation: God's greatest work! This awesome fact manifests one of the key elements of our rich Franciscan theology, namely, we always have a choice: either to stand by as spectators, gazing upon the crib scene as if it were a mere decoration or just another seasonal ornament, or we can become part of the scene and allow the mystery to come alive in us, as Francis did. There we see and experience the powerful messages and examples of poverty, humility, solidarity, dependence and love. Francis allowed himself to be enwrapped in the mystery of God's unconditional love. Will we allow God to do the same for us this Christmas?!

Visit our website: <http://www.sfastbonaventure-detroit.org>

# MINISTER'S LETTER



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

*May our Lord's peace and all good be with you!*

“Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son,  
and they shall name him ‘Emmanuel,’ which means “God is with us” (Mt1:23).

Perhaps it was this one line from Scripture that gave St. Francis his focus on the Incarnation of Jesus and thus the focus for Franciscan prayer. With this, the monastic tradition was turned upside down! God is not *somewhere ‘up there’, unable to be reached or approached, but rather **God is with us, even within us!***

I recently attended a Franciscan retreat during which Fr. Roch Niemier, OFM was one of the speakers. Fr. Roch taught that the focus of personal Franciscan prayer comes from the writings of St. Clare, but certainly reflected the spirituality of St. Francis in which the Incarnation became the focus of the Franciscan charism. The *cloister* for Franciscans became the entire world because Christ “became man and dwelt among us.” Do you remember how we used to genuflect when we came to that part of the Creed? We did so, of course, to acknowledge this awesome event. What we need to do now is to again remember this fact and go out into the world proclaiming this Good News!

It takes much energy and power within our spirit to do this with our lives, but this is exactly what the Secular Franciscan vocation is all about. Fr. Roch taught the four steps of Franciscan personal prayer which are necessary so that we might receive the grace of power and energy of spirit.

1. **GAZE** in quiet attentiveness at the Crucified Savior.
2. **CONSIDER** the purity of your focus, the single-mindedness of keeping your eyes on Jesus.
3. **CONTEMPLATE**, which, for Franciscans, means learning that God is praying with us! God lives in us. Prayer is what God does to me. Enter the mystery by letting go.
4. **IMITATE**, which does not mean to mimic, but rather, to become. It is transformation. Gazing on the Cross brings one to the humility and love of our beloved Lord. Transformation is about what God has always wanted us to be – that is, having the energy and power to go out and change the world! It is a matter of working at life together as Secular Franciscans.

No wonder Christmas is filled with stories of St. Francis. All of Franciscan spirituality is Incarnational! Thus Franciscans do not ascend to God in prayer. God descends to us through the Incarnation, brings his love and salvation through the Cross, and through prayer and embracing the world – rather than by fleeing, hiding or escaping it – we are transformed into his image!

## REMINDER:

December's Third Sunday is the concert which is a benefit for the Solanus Casey Center. Please bring goodies like cookies, candies, simple finger foods, fruit, but no sandwiches. Wear comfortable shoes as we are going to serve the guests attending like we did last year. Everyone had such a good time, we are doing it again. A free-will offering will be taken for the Solanus Casey Center. Come at 1:30 pm. Attendance envelopes will be in the dining hall along with a few handouts. Announcements will be at 1:40 pm, after which we shall go to the Chapel for the Christmas Concert. **THERE IS NO MASS.**

Merry Christmas and God bless you, dear ones!



Janet

# CAPUCHIN MINISTER'S LETTER

The Province of St. Joseph  
of the Capuchin Order  
Office of the Provincial Minister

October 22, 2007

St. Bonaventure Secular Franciscans  
c/o Janet Bodell, SFO, Minister  
1780 Mt. Elliott St.  
Detroit, MI 48207

To the St. Bonaventure Secular Franciscans:

*Peace and all good!*

I want to thank you for your gracious and generous gift of \$1,000.00 for a bench outside the new candelarium. Your monetary gift will help us in providing another place of respite, prayer and reflection for pilgrims to the Solanus Casey Center.

As Capuchin Franciscan Friars, we are so aware that all is gift. For the true spirit of generosity that this gift represents, we give thanks and praise.

May God bless you.

Fr. Daniel E. Anholzer, OFM Cap  
Provincial Minister



(l-r) Janet Bodell, Br. Dan Anholzer, Br. Pat McSherry

## From the Friars' Choir

If you want to know if you are a loving [gentle, respectful, warm] person, don't ask yourself how you treat others, ask others how they feel treated when they encounter you.

*(from the homily on the feast of St. Elizabeth)*



# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE SOLANUS CASEY CENTER

October 23, 2007

Dear brothers and sisters of St. Bonaventure's Secular Franciscan Fraternity,

Thank you for your gracious and generous gift. Your Votive Chapel SFO Bench donation of \$1,000.00 is truly a blessing for us and our Capuchin Ministries. Here at the Solanus Casey Center and at St. Bonaventure Chapel, our ministry reaches so many people who are seeking solace and consolation in the midst of life's trials and difficulties. People come to the Center to 'watch and pray', some seek physical healing through Fr. Solanus' intercession, others seek the spiritual healing of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, still others wish to sort out what really is important in their lives through spiritual direction. This holy place is sanctified not only by the presence of Fr. Solanus' tomb, but also by the wonderful faith, hope and love that pilgrims carry with them when they arrive.

Ministry happens here. I witness the depth of God's love daily and I marvel at the diversity and spontaneity of its expression in so many faces that come here. Recently, a Secular Franciscan picked up one of the "Knights of the Road" – a street person – who frequents our Wednesday healing service and took him out to a nearby mall in order to buy him a pair of boots. The ones he had were a size too big. The merchant was so moved by this fellow's charity that he refused to take any money! Love grows. Miracles happen.

That's exactly what your donation does, it makes ministry happen and opens up the channels of grace in our hearts to allow love to grow and miracles to happen. God is Good and so are you! Thank you for helping us to help others. God will not be outdone in generosity. Watch and see. You will be blessed. Be sure that you are remembered in the daily prayers of the friars.

Gratefully yours in Christ,

Daniel Fox, OFM Cap.

Director of the Solanus Casey Center

## ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

by Clara Falzone, SFO



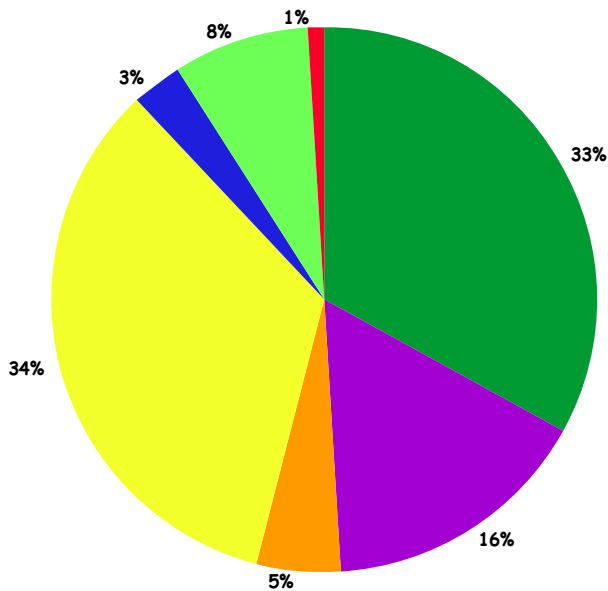
**Dec. 8 ----- For Global Warming Awareness: the Polar Plunge** with Fr. Charles Morris to take place at Lake Erie Beach, adjacent to 3325 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Monroe, MI. For more information, call St. Elizabeth's at: 734-287-7727.

**Dec. 9 ----- Illumination Series: Care of Creation** with Fr. John S. Rausch, to take place at St. Cyprian's Church, 13429 Pennsylvania Road, Riverview, MI 48193. For additional information, contact: 734-283-1366.

**Dec. 16 ----- Illumination Series: Fate of the Earth: A Faith Issue** with Sr. Miriam Therese MacGillis, to take place at St. Cyprian's Church, Riverview, MI. For the exact time, please call 734-283-1366.

# FROM THE TREASURER

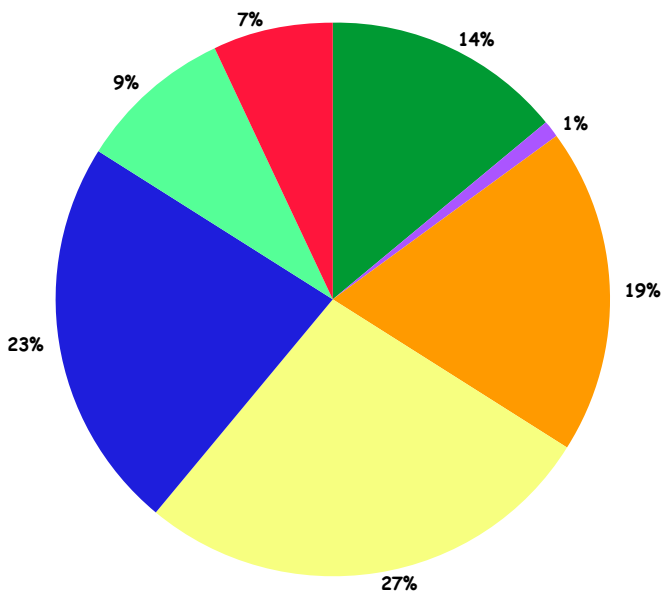
## INCOME



January 1 thru October 31, 2007

■ - Members - All Donations .....	\$13,379.
■ - Contributed Rent .....	\$6,273.
■ - Fair Share and Poverello Contributions .....	\$1,874.
■ - Interest Income & Religious Articles .....	\$13,816.
■ - 120 <sup>th</sup> Jubilee .....	\$1,026.
■ - Fr. Solanus Concert .....	\$3,260.
■ - Non-Member Donations .....	\$210.
- TOTAL INCOME .....	\$39,837.

## EXPENSES & TRANSFERS TO SAVINGS



January 1 thru October 31, 2007

■ - Fair Share Donations to Region .....	\$5,546.
■ - Fraternity Programs and Meetings .....	\$471.
■ - Donations and Transfers to Savings .....	\$7,661.
■ - Rent and Security Guard Expenses .....	\$10,617.
■ - Office and Poverello Expenses .....	\$9,208.
■ - Apostolic and Outreach Ministries .....	\$3,442.
■ - 120 <sup>th</sup> Jubilee and Fr. Solanus Concert .....	\$2,892.
- TOTAL EXPENSES .....	\$39,837.



**Deceased Relatives & Friends**

Lois Bettin  
 Conrad Laskowski

**Members Needing Prayers**

Wilhelmina Adkins	Sophie Martin
Kay Balas	Dorothy Mataragas
Irma Barlage	Maria McNally
Fred Dinverno	Ray Morehead
Natalie Grabowski	Bob and Dolores Peckham
Virginia Hale	Theresa Pfaendter
James Heymes	Maxine Piaseczny
Donna Marie Johnston	Mary Saber
Joseph Marra	Joseph Wisk

**Others Needing Prayers**

Joseph Allen	Stefan Florescu
Shawn Atkinson	Bob and Marie Fontanive
Mary Ann Avery	Fr. Mark Garrow
David Barlage	Rita Gerwolls and Family
Ellie Beck	Pat Haas
Becky Berkie	Helen Hawley
Bonnie Black	Ted Hojna
Melanie Bruss	Don Hubbard
Robert Carcznski	Becky Jaynes
Marirose Carillo	Angie Kay
Marcella Carter & Claudia	Mary Kiupka
Alice Cavaiani	Marilyn Lewandoski
Fr. John Christ	Deven Lilburn
Patricia Doyle	Beverly Livingston
Rose Driessen	Nancy MacDonald
Mary Duck	Gail Mazurkiewicz
Hames Edwards	Jean Nozewski
Pat Ennis	Fr. Thomas Peacock
Barbara Ertzbischoff	Scott Phillips
Beverly Falzone	Amy Quinn

Teresa Rabine	Al Traczynski
Angel Richard	Marie Urban
Martha Richardson	Harold Walker
Michael Rychlewski	Daryl Watkins
Kathy Stewart	Mary Ann Zink
Tracy Stockton	Dora Zito

**Memorials**

Mary Kageff  
 Otto Kageff  
 Viola Kageff  
 John Ridley  
 Lillian Simoney

**Those Serving Our Country**

Andrew Arcznski  
 Christopher Beattie  
 Francisco Biber  
 Tom Chmielarczyk  
 John Marra III  
 Joseph Marra, Jr.

To update our prayer request list, call:

**Jo Marie Nardi at 586-978-2335**



**TRISTAN MORRIS**

**3 years old**

**Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia**

Tristan loves magic tricks and playing with his toy cars, trains and boats. Tristan’s family is very grateful to all the people who support St. Jude and his mom says, “If I could, I would go and meet every one of them and personally thank them for making my child’s treatment possible.”

## ST. FRANCIS AT GRECCIO

With St. Francis, we come to a turning point in Crib history. Popular opinion is just as mistaken in thinking that Francis originated the custom of the Crib as it is in ascribing almost exclusively to him an attitude of tender compassion toward animals. Early Christian literature is full of tales illustrating the intimacy of saints and beasts; and in his youth, Francis undoubtedly saw Nativity dramas and the then familiar iconography of the Nativity. Francis must have prayed often in the Praesepe [nativity crib] chapels in Rome, and when he visited the Holy Places in 1220, something of their spirit was planted in him. For Francis, Christmas had always been the “feast of feasts,” bringing light and hope into a dark, cold world; the day when “heaven and earth are made one” and “God condescended to be fed by human love.” If Christmas fell on a Friday, he swept aside fasting, wishing to see even “the walls rubbed with fat,” every poor person entertained by the richer, and double rations given to every animal, especially to oxen and asses. If he could have spoken to the Emperor, the first favor he would have begged would have been a decree ordering corn to be scattered on the roads so that all birds, “but especially our sisters, the larks” would also feast.

The idea of celebrating the feast in a *special* way seems to have occurred to him suddenly during the Advent of 1223. He was in Rome, and before leaving, he asked the Pope’s permission to observe Christmas in his own way, so as to realize outwardly the poverty of Christ in the manger. He sent for his friend, Giovanni Vellita, a landowner of Greccio where Francis had a favorite hermitage. “If now it seems good to you that we should celebrate this feast together, go before me to Greccio and prepare everything as I tell you. I desire to re-present the birth of that Child in Bethlehem in such a way that with our bodily eyes we may see what he suffered for lack of the necessities of a newborn babe and how he lay in manger between the ox and ass.” Giovanni hastened to obey and, says St. Bonaventure, “Many brothers and good people came at Francis’ bidding. Many lights were kindled, songs and hymns were sung with great solemnity so that the whole wood echoed with the sound, and the man of God stood by the manger, filled with the utmost joy and shedding tears of devotion and compassion. By his order, the manger had been so arranged that Mass was celebrated on it, and blessed Francis sang the Gospel and preached to the people on the Nativity of Christ our King, and whenever he pronounced Jesus’ name with infinite tenderness he called him the “little Babe of Bethlehem.” St. Bonaventure goes on to tell of the vision of Giovanni who saw a babe, seemingly lifeless in the manger until the saint awoke him out of sleep; and he comments: “nor was this vision untrue, for by the grace of God through his servant, blessed Francis, Christ was awakened in many hearts where formerly he slept.”

St. Francis’ other biographer, Thomas of Celano, tells how “Greccio was transformed into a second Bethlehem, and that wonderful night seemed like fullest day to both man and beast for the joy they felt at the renewing of the mystery.” He emphasizes the unusual consolation felt by the officiating priest, and the strong, sweet, clear voice of Francis as he read the Gospel and preached “saying all manner of tender things on the birth of the Poor King in Little Bethlehem. Repeatedly whenever he wished to name Jesus Christ, inflamed with immense love he called him “Babe of Bethlehem,” pronouncing the words almost like the bleating of a sheep, and his mouth seemed full, not only of his voice, but with emotion for when he named Jesus or babe of Bethlehem, he licked his lips as though to taste the full sweetness of the words.” Only an eyewitness could have given Thomas that detail.

This, then, was Francis’ Nativity celebration; it had no connection with the Nativity plays and dramas in that he did not impersonate anyone, nor did the priest or brothers. There were neither the traditional figures nor dialogues, and there may or may not have been a figure in the manger. Nevertheless, the Nativity of our Lord was realized that night as fully as perhaps it ever can be. The love, the devotion, the concentration of each individual became one with that of Francis, and in Sabatier’s words: “he was no longer in Greccio; his heart was in Bethlehem.”



Detail of the  
14<sup>th</sup>-Century fresco  
in the Grotto of the Crib  
Greccio (Rieti), Italy

Source: *The Christmas Crib* by Nesta de Robeck, Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1956.

# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2008

January 20, 2008 ..... St. Bonaventure Fraternity Chapter  
February 17, 2008 ..... Regular Third Sunday Meeting  
February 23, 2008 ..... Mass for SFO Deceased (10 AM)  
March 9, 2008 ..... Day of Reflection (anticipated because of Palm Sunday)  
April 20, 2008 ..... Mass and Renewal of Profession of SFO Jubilarians  
May 18, 2008 ..... Regular Third Sunday Meeting  
June 8, 2008 ..... Regular Third Sunday Meeting (anticipated because of Fathers' Day)  
June 28, 2008 ..... Mass for SFO Deceased (10 AM)  
July 20, 2008 ..... Annual Picnic  
August 17, 2008 ..... Regular Third Sunday Meeting  
September 21, 2008 ..... Day of Reflection  
October 19, 2008 ..... Regular Third Sunday Meeting  
October 25, 2008 ..... Mass for SFO Deceased (10 AM)  
November 16, 2008 ... Mass and Profession  
December 21, 2008 ..... Christmas Concert

## KNOW A POTENTIAL SECULAR FRANCISCAN?

Inquirer Classes and Candidate Classes begin on January 20<sup>th</sup> at Noon. If you know individuals who you think might make good Secular Franciscans, invite them. The group meets at Noon in the second floor Conference Room of the Solanus Casey Center.

## FRANCISCAN SAINTS OF DECEMBER

8 ..... Immaculate Conception, Queen of the Franciscan Order  
10 ..... Bl. Peter Tecelano, SFO  
15 ..... Bl. Mary Frances Schervier, SFO and religious



December 6 ..... Mary Saber  
December 7 ..... Mary Ann Kristensen  
December 10 ..... Margaret D'Hulster  
December 11 ..... Ralph Mason  
December 12 ..... Irene Mecha  
December 13 ..... Veronica Yuhase

December 17 ..... Helen Wardowski  
December 24 ..... Joseph Pierce  
December 25 ..... Patricia Meldrum  
December 29 ..... Lorna Brock  
December 30 ..... Frank Laramie  
December 31 ..... Sylvia Snigier

St. Hubert Ministry  
presents

# *Christmas Seekers*



A Christmas Concert  
to benefit the Solanus Casey Center

Sunday, December 16, 2007  
at 2:00 PM

at St. Bonaventure Chapel  
1780 Mt. Elliott St.  
Detroit, MI 48207

*Featuring:*

The St. Hubert Adult and Bell Choirs  
and

St. Peter on the Thames Music Ministry  
and

The Sterling Brass

586-838-4180

Free Will Offering

# DECEMBER 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 ADVENT I Pss. Wk. 1	3	4	5	6 Thursday Meeting: 1 PM	7	8 IMMACULATE CONCEPTION: PATRON OF THE ENTIRE FRANCISCAN ORDER HOLY DAY IN US
9 ADVENT II Pss. Wk. 2	10	11 St. Joan of Arc: 1 PM	12	13	14 Fr. Solanus Cell: 7:30 PM	15
16 ADVENT III Gaudete Pss. Wk. 3 CHRISTMAS CONCERT	17	18	19 SFO COUNCIL: 6:30 PM	20 St. Alfred's: 7 PM EMB Board: 10 AM	21 Interfaith Meeting: 7 PM	22
23 ADVENT IV Pss. Wk. 4	24 CHRISTIAN SERVICE: Service Center 9:00 am - Noon	25 CHRISTMAS	26	27	28 Bl. Luchesio: 7:30 PM CHRISTIAN SERVICE: Meldrum Kitchen 10:30 am - 1 pm	29
30	31					

Please patronize our advertizers

<p><b>Gerry Marson</b> Shaklee Distributor 8070 Busch Centerline, MI 48015 • 586-754-3808</p> <p><b>Shaklee</b> Independent Distributor</p> <p><i>Types of Products</i> Nutritional Household Personal Care</p> <p>Products in Harmony with Nature and Good Health</p>	<p><b>JERROLD MARSH</b> ATTORNEY AND COUNSELOR</p> <p>23100 Jefferson S. of 9 Mile St. Clair Shores, MI 48080 1-586-445-0123 or 1-313-884-7322 (24 Hours) for appointment</p>	
<p><b>MICHAEL W. BARTNIK</b> ATTORNEY AT LAW PROFESSIONAL LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY 3271 FIVE POINTS DR., SUITE 204 AUBURN HILLS, MICHIGAN 48326 (248) 276-2370 FAX (248) 3276-2371 e-mail: bartniklaw.com</p>	 <p><b>ANGEL POINT</b> on the shores of Lake Huron SPIRITUALITY / RETREAT</p> <p>CENTER WORKSHOPS PRIVATE RETREATS</p> <p>Director: William Henning Phone: 586-791-2564 586-622-9225</p>	 <p><b>"GLORIA AT YOUR SERVICE"</b> <i>Care Giver</i> 1-586-756-2676</p>

# FAX ET PHONUM

**Minister**

Janet Bodell

**Vice Minister**

Ona Harris

**Treasurer**

Eugene Snyder

**Secretary**

Patricia Meldrum

**Formation**

John Bodell

**Councillors:**

- Clara Falzone
- Caroline Florescu
- Gary Johnson
- Frank Kraimer
- Maryann Kummer
- Maxine Piaseczny

**Spiritual Assistant:**

Br. Patrick McSherry

**APPOINTMENTS**

**Infirmarians:**

- Jo Marie Nardi
- Sylvia Stanik

**Continuing Formation:**

Maryann Kummer

**Christian Service:**

Frank Kraimer

**Ecology:**

Clara Falzone

**Work:**

Gary Johnson

**Family:**

**Peace and Justice:**

- Jo Marie Nardi
- Maxine Piaseczny

**Eucharistic Mission Band (EMB):**

Caroline Florescu

**USUAL MEETING TIMES & CONTACTS**

(for Locations and Times of Meetings)

**Fr. Solanus Cell (2<sup>nd</sup> Friday, 7:30 pm):**

Faye Boland

**St. Joan of Arc Satellite (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 1 pm):**

Frank Liccardello

**First Thursday Meeting (1 pm):**

Raymond Morehead

**Third Sunday General SFO Meeting:**

Maryann Kummer

**St. Alfred Cell (3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, 7:00 pm):**

Gertrude Beatty

**Bl. Luchesio Cell (4<sup>th</sup> Friday, 7:30 pm):**

Janice E. Litch

*The Poverello* is published by the  
St. Bonaventure Secular Franciscan Fraternity  
1780 Mt. Elliott St.

Detroit, Michigan 48207  
Phone: 313-579-2100, ext. 136  
e-mail: secular\_franciscans@yahoo.com  
URL: sfostbonaventure-detroit.org

Deadline for articles is 3:30 PM  
of the 3rd Sunday of each month.



St. Bonaventure  
Third Order Fraternity  
1780 Mt. Elliott St.  
Detroit, Michigan 48207

